

Norman Podhoretz on Trump's Virtues

The Editors

replying to [Thomas Klingenstein's "Our House Divided: Multiculturalism vs. America"](#)

The neoconservative founder talks Trump—and finds him on the right side of the patriotism vs. multiculturalism divide.

Charles Kesler, a Claremont Institute Senior Fellow and the Editor of the *Claremont Review of Books*, recently sat down with Norman Podhoretz at his home in New York. In a wide-ranging conversation, excerpted below, the Editor-in-Chief of *Commentary* for 35 years and one of the founders of neoconservatism revealed his thoughts on Donald Trump and the present American moment—and where it has brought us.

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CRB:

[...] many of your new set of ex-friends, as you call them, were with you on Iraq and democratization, which explains partly at least, why they are against Trump. You deviated from them, or they deviated from you.

NP:

[...] I think we're all in a state of confusion as to what's going on. Tom Klingenstein has made a [brilliant effort to explain it](#), in terms that haven't really been used before. He says that our domestic politics has erupted into a kind of war between patriotism and multiculturalism, and he draws out the implications of that war very well. I might put it in different terms—love of America versus hatred of America. But it's the same idea. We find ourselves in a domestic, or civil, war almost.

[...]

CRB:

What are [Trump's] virtues, if you had to enumerate them?

NP:

His virtues are the virtues of the street kids of Brooklyn. You don't back away from a fight and you fight to win. That's one of the things that the Americans who love him, love him for—that he's willing to fight, not willing but *eager*

to fight. And that's the main virtue and all the rest stem from, [as Klingenstein says](#), his love of America. I mean, Trump loves America. He thinks it's great or could be made great again.

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